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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Terror crushes Aznar - Milliyet
Al-Qaeda shakes Spanish ballot box - Milliyet
Kurds revolt in Syria, 52 dead - Milliyet 3/14
FM Gul calls for peace in Syria - Hurriyet
Iraqi Turkmen Front leader escapes assassination - Milliyet
US moves in Afghanistan to get Bin Ladin - Milliyet 3/14
War chimes in Georgia - Sabah
NATO shield over Athens Games - Sabah 3/14

OPINION MAKERS

Terror bells toll in Europe - Radikal 3/14
Spaniards punish government - Cumhuriyet
Blix: Iraq war has fanned terror - Cumhuriyet
Damascus closes border with Turkey - Radikal
In Putin We Trust - Zaman 3/14
Karamanlis, Denktas won't go to Lucerne talks - Cumhuriyet
Turkey to send 3 helicopters to Afghanistan - Cumhuriyet
3/14
US-trained Iraqi policemen shot Americans - Zaman 3/14
Double suicide attack in Israel: 11 dead - Zaman

BRIEFING

"Hurriyet" exclusive with the King of Jordan: In an exclusive to "Hurriyet" on the eve of his March 16 visit to Ankara, Jordanian King Abdullah praised Turkey for maintaining an impartial position in the Middle East. Turkey's ties with the Middle East will be strengthened after Turkey's EU accession, Abdullah said. Abdullah noted that the Iraqi Kurds have acquired de facto autonomy, and are not expected to step back from their current position. Regional countries are against the founding of an independent Kurdish state, Abdullah said, and added that the US must find a formula for resolving the problem. The Jordanian King confirmed that members of the Uzan family had been given Jordanian passports, which will expire at the end of 2004. He rejected allegations that some Uzan family members are hiding in Jordan, and said that the Uzans' passports would be confiscated if they try to enter the country. Genc Party leader Cem Uzan had previously denied allegations that he had acquired Jordanian citizenship.

Athens may ban anti-Turkey terror groups: The Greek Foreign Ministry has asked Ankara to provide a list of terror groups that are active in Turkey. Turkish authorities welcomed the step as a sign that Greece was considering ending its support for groups like the PKK and DHKP-C. "Milliyet" claims that the Kurdish separatist PKK/Kongra-Gel and extreme left DHKP-C have been operating in Athens for some time. The terrorists have allegedly been given military training at the Lavrion camp.

Ethnic unrest in Syria: 52 people died in clashes between Kurdish and Arab groups in Syria's Kamishli village near the Turkish border, weekend papers report. Pro-Kurdish demonstrations have also spread to the capital Damascus, and two Syrian diplomatic offices were been attacked in Europe. Syria closed its border with Turkey. Turkish businessmen in northern Syria fled to Turkey to escape the violence, and the Turkish military was reportedly placed on high alert as a result of the rioting in Kamishli.

Cyprus: New Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis rejected a proposal by PM Erdogan that the four-way talks on Cyprus to be held in Lucerne, Switzerland be held at the level of Prime Minister. Inexperienced on the Cyprus issue, Karamanlis prefers to remain distant from the negotiations due to his fear of failure, papers speculate. Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas is unhappy with the uncompromising attitude of the Greek Cypriots at the UN-sponsored peace talks, and is reluctant to attend the Lucerne meetings. If Denktas is not convinced by Ankara, Turkish Cypriots will be headed by the 'TRNC Prime Minister' Talat at the four-party talks.

TGS Chief says he is responsible for military directive: Monday papers report that TGS Chief General Hilmi Ozkok acknowledged responsibility for a controversial directive by the Land Forces Command asking district governors to spy on individuals seen as dangerous to national security. 'If there is a fault,' Ozkok said, 'the responsibility falls on me as commander of the military.' The list called for intelligence to be gathered on a wide variety of groups including ethnic minorities, writers, artists and supporters of the EU and the US.

TGS Deputy Chief due in US: Deputy Chief of the TGS General Ilker Basbug will convey to the United States Turkey's uneasiness over Iraq, and will discuss the PKK, Cyprus, and EU during his upcoming visit to the US, "Milliyet" reports. The article speculates that Washington wants to see the Turkish military soften its grip on domestic politics in light of developments in Cyprus and Turkey's EU drive. US officials were "perplexed" to hear about an army directive for spying on Turks who are known to be supporters of the EU and US, but will not raise the issue with General Basbug. An unnamed US official said that the US has launched a fresh initiative in support of Turkey with some countries that will join the EU in May 2004.

Jailed Kurdish lawmakers boycott court hearing: Kurdish lawmakers from the former DEP -- Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak -- refused to appear at their hearing before the State Security Court (SSC) in Ankara last Friday in an act of protest. The defendants reportedly objected to comments made by Government Spokesman Cicek, who accused them of intentionally dragging out their trial for political purposes. The defendants' lawyers noted that their clients have been in prison since 1994, and demanded their immediate release. The court turned down the request. The defendants will not attend hearings for the remainder of the trial.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Spanish Elections/Madrid Bombings

"Madrid Bombings"

Yilmaz Oztuna observed in the conservative Turkiye (3/15): "The Madrid bombings mark the spread of terrorism to the European Union. When Istanbul suffered its terrorist attacks, there was no mention of terrorism in EU countries. Yet the Madrid attack indicates the spread of 9/11 terrorism in the US to the EU. . The EU countries have never understood terrorism, and they preferred to remain aloof to the issue as long as they were not affected. Moreover, some of them did not change their policy and continued to support terrorist organizations in Turkey. They had better reevaluate their approach in light of these events. . There are indications that strongly suggest that Al-Qaeda was behind the terrorist attack in Madrid, but the Spanish government seems determined to label the bombings as an ETA attack. Worst of all is the possibility that there was collaboration between Al-Qaeda and ETA. . The events of 9/11 led to a change in world politics, and the events of 3/11 in Madrid mark another important event in that process of change."

"Terror in Spain"

Zafer Atay noted in the economic-political Dunya (3/15): "Arguing about whether ETA or Al-Qaeda carried out the terrorist attack may be too limited an approach, because it is now common for terrorist organizations to cooperate and coordinate with each other. ETA might be the driving force behind this attack, and may have used Al-Qaeda as a kind of subcontractor. Let's not forget that the Japanese Red Army used to carry out terrorist attacks on behalf of Palestinian organizations. . Searching for the truth about who may have done this, we should also look at EU member countries. Basque terror still enjoys support from some EU members. Some of them also continue to provide support for terrorist organizations in Turkey. After the Spanish elections, the Turkish government should immediately begin a process to enhance cooperation against terrorism with the new

administration in Madrid. We can only hope that some other EU members will eventually come to their senses as well."

"Terrorist States and the Terrorists"

Erol Manisali argued in the social democrat-intellectual Cumhuriyet: "During the cold war, the US used terrorism as a tool in order to continue its struggle for `global hegemony.' Now that the cold war is over, the US has turned into a terrorist state and has acted like a war machine by occupying the Middle East and Asia. The process began with the first Gulf war and continued with the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. In between, Yugoslavia was divided by force, and operations took place against the Caucasus and Indonesia. The US and Great Britain, ignoring the world and the UN, are continuing their war and occupations. Half of the EU, including Spain, contributed to this crime directly. Trying to legitimate the belief that the powerful can realize their objectives by force, the US (and western capitalism) has helped to expand the swamp in which terror flourishes. The US believes that, in order to remain a superpower, it has to act under the principle that `whoever doesn't stand with me is against me.' Western capitalism contributes to this instability, sometimes through force of arms as in Iraq, and sometimes through civil revolutions, as in Turkey. It is impossible to stop terrorism while there is deep instability and terrorist states in the world. Since it is not to their benefit to understand this fact, the US and the EU have chosen to ignore it."

EDELMAN